



State of Washington

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Mailing Address: 600 Capitol Way N - Olympia, Washington 98501-1091 - (360) 902-2200, TDD (360) 902-2207

Main Office location: Natural Resources Building - 1111 Washington Street SE - Olympia, WA

ADDENDUM 14-024 TO DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE 13-076

DATED: November 15, 2013

Name of DNS: 13-076: CHINOOK ESTUARY RESTORATION

Description of DNS:

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife is proposing a first phase of restoration to the Chinook River Wildlife Unit along the Chinook River in Pacific County. The primary goal of this phase of work is to expand on previous restoration efforts to recover the natural estuarine and riparian wetland habitats of the Chinook River by restoring historically present tidal flows through the estuary. WDFW is developing this restoration in partnership with the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The outcome is a functioning estuary that will provide significant habitat improvements for in-basin (Chinook River) and out-of-basin (Columbia River) anadromous salmonids. Three primary objectives are:

- Benefit the fish and wildlife management objectives of the WDFW Wildlife Area, while protecting adjacent landowners from risk of flooding.
- Directly and indirectly support the restoration of anadromous fish populations of the Chinook River and the Columbia River Basin; with an emphasis on recovery of ESA-listed stocks.
- Provide enhanced fish and wildlife based recreational opportunities to the public.

This project is a fish habitat enhancement project for the recovery of ESA-listed salmonids. The Chinook River estuary historically supported five anadromous salmonid species: steelhead, sea-run cutthroat, Chinook, coho, and chum salmon. Recent monitoring indicates that the abundance of these species in the Chinook River watershed has been significantly reduced from historic levels. The Chinook River estuary also provides important rearing habitat for out-of-basin juvenile salmonids originating from the Columbia River. The loss of habitat and reduction of salmonid populations is attributed primarily to the construction of the Highway 101 overpass and associated tide gate structures in the early 1920's. During this time, wetlands within the Chinook estuary were converted to agricultural fields and pastures. Drainage of these low elevation fields was created incorporating the existing tidal sloughs and the addition of an extensive ditch network. Numerous crossings with culverts have been incorporated into the system over the past century, and many of these crossings and structures have failed, blocking and/or limiting tidal exchange. WDFW has located several crossings over historical tidal sloughs and channels that are crucial for maximization of estuarine and fish habitat. Opening these channels is a simple and effective way of restoring these key ecological processes. These enhancements will occur on WDFW lands (1,051 acres total), including a 201 acre fee title property located to the north of Giles Island on the Chinook River, acquired during 2013.

The specific project elements are:

- 1) Restore and/or excavate 3,300 linear feet corresponding to approximately 3,800 cubic yards

(cy) of artificially filled or altered tidal channels;

2) Remove by excavation ~~eight (8)~~ **up to twelve (12)** relict channel crossings (approximately 900 cy) – these channel crossings currently completely block the channels.

3) Use excavated material to enhance floodplain complexity.

4) Install three ~~30"~~ **36"** culverts with tide gates under first crossing. Install one 30" culvert under second crossing. Install two ~~30"~~ **36"** culverts with tide gates on third crossing. Build access road up to earthwork spoils site. Work will be completed with excavators, dump trucks and dozers.

5) Excavate 7,060 linear feet of existing drainage ditches. An excavator/or other appropriate equipment would be used to scrape reed canary grass (RCG) mats down to a minimum of one foot on one side of the linear agricultural ditches. This material would then be used to fill the ditches. Total volume of fill (ditch fill) = 25,781 CY.

5 6) Replant all disturbed areas with native plants and seed.

Proponent/Applicant: Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

Contact: Donna Bighouse

2108 Grand Blvd

Vancouver, WA. 98661

(360) 906-6738

Donna.Bighouse@dfw.wa.gov

Location of DNS, including street, if any: WDFW Chinook River Wildlife Unit, approximately 2 miles north of Chinook, Washington, Pacific County; Sections 5, 6, 8, 31, 32, Township 09 North, Range 10 West WM.

Lead Agency: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

WDFW is providing updated information on this project that may be of interest to other agencies or the public. The updated information provided below does not substantially change the analysis of significant impacts in the existing environmental checklist.

1. Remove by excavation up to twelve (12) relict channel crossings (approximately 1,500 cy) – these channel crossings currently completely block the channels.

2. Install three 36" culverts with tide gates under first crossing. Install one 30" culvert under second crossing. Install two 36" culverts with tide gates on third crossing. Build access road up to earthwork spoils site.

3. Excavate 7,060 linear feet of existing drainage ditches. An excavator/or other appropriate equipment would be used to scrape reed canary grass (RCG) mats down to a minimum of one foot on one side of the linear agricultural ditches. This material would then be used to fill the ditches. Total volume of fill (ditch fill)=25,781 CY.

Based on the original environmental checklist and the updated information provided in this addendum, we have determined that a new threshold determination is not warranted. There is no comment period associated with this SEPA environmental checklist addendum.

Responsible Official: Lisa Wood

Position/Title: SEPA/NEPA Coordinator, WDFW Regulatory Services Section

Address: 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, WA 98501-1091

If you have questions about this action, contact Lisa Wood at the address above,

SEPADesk2@dfw.wa.gov, phone (360) 902-2260, or fax (360) 902-2946.

DATE OF ISSUE: April 3, 2014

SIGNATURE:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Wood". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

SEPA Log Number: 14 -024 addendum